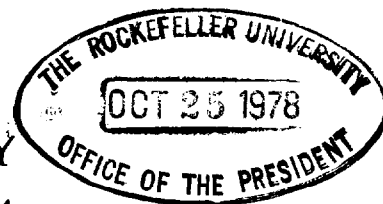




# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE · NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021



October 24, 1978

James Murray Luck Selection Committee

Dr. Philip W. Anderson  
Dr. Eugene Garfield  
Dr. Bentley Glass  
Dr. Joshua Lederberg

Gentlemen:

The Home Secretary has yielded gracefully to my opinion that we couldn't conceivably go through an adequate selection procedure and have a nominee for the December Council meeting as originally requested. However it is deemed desirable to have a selection for the first award in time for the award to be made at the spring NAS meeting and this could be managed if we could have our nominee chosen in time for the February Council meeting, so I guess that's the tentative target.

If you could give me your initial thoughts on a few relevant points within the next week or two I'll try to assemble them and rough out a program we might follow. Since this will be the first award of this prize we are in a position to set precedents rather than having to follow any.

First of all, it is evidently up to us to decide the overall plan for what is expected to be at least a five-year series of awards. We could decide to make the choice from nominees over all scientific fields or to categorize fields and rotate the award through them over successive years. Still more important, we'll need to agree on what aspects of scientific reviewing we feel are most deserving or in need of this recognition. It would evidently be within the intended scope of the award to include, for example, reviewing that constitutes interpretation of science for the public. On the other hand, critical and integrative reviews of scientific literature of a deeper sort and intended for scientists often play an important part in leading to theoretical contributions and yet never

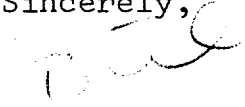
seem to come in for recognition by way of prizes and the like. I guess my own choice would be to try to set the emphasis in the latter direction by trying to find that kind of contribution to recognize with the first prize. An example that comes immediately to my mind, though I don't intend this as a nomination, would be Ernest R. Hilgard's Monograph, Theories of Learning, which appeared in its first edition in 1948 and though it did not include any original theoretical contribution virtually created the specialty of learning theory in psychology and was extremely influential in shaping this field over the next twenty years. There must be similarly conspicuous examples in other fields.

The principal question of tactics is how to secure nominations. We need to be reasonably thorough; on the other hand the Committee doesn't have any staff and evidently meagre financing. As on other similar enterprises I imagine I'll contribute some secretarial time, but the amount is limited and we need to accomplish as much as possible with a reasonably limited number of communications. Here your ideas or suggestions are most essential.

As you may have noted, our Committee has been neatly confined to a small geographical area so that if we need to meet it can be done relatively conveniently and cheaply in New York City. Would you give me first thoughts as to whether it would likely be reasonably convenient for you to come to the City for an afternoon meeting, whether you think it's likely that we should meet early before trying to carry out the process of securing nominations or later after nominations are in or both.

That's surely enough for this communication. I'll come back to you all when I've had some input in response to this one.

Sincerely,

  
William K. Estes  
Chairman  
James Murray Luck  
Selection Committee